

**M**ANY foreigners, and some Englishmen, find it difficult to understand how the task of advising the Government on Ecclesiastical preferment can be entrusted to the hands of a senior, but secular, Civil Servant. Invariably the answer is given that the system works, and the general praise that Sir Anthony Bevin has won during his fifteen years as Secretary for Appointments at 10, Downing Street, shows that there is much force in this reply.

Now Sir Anthony is retiring and Mr. David Stephens comes from a big, bare office in the Treasury to take his place.

Before he leaves at the end of the year Sir Anthony Bevin will have to advise the Prime Minister on the choice of a new Archbishop of York and a new Bishop of London. Mr. Stephens will sit, and learn, at Sir Anthony's elbow during the sitting of candidates.

#### Cloak and Dagger

Mr. Stephens, a "middle-of-the-road churchman" with a penchant for cricket and the country, has never before been deeply concerned with church affairs. His sole contact with bishops en masse came when he worked as Clerk in the House of Lords after coming down from Christ Church.

The family links with Oxford and Winchester are strong. During the war he served with his fellow Wykehamists, Richard Crossman, in the Psychological Warfare Executive. It was in those cloak-and-dagger days that he first met the present Prime Minister.

At the Treasury Mr. Stephens has been primarily concerned with the harshly material task of balancing foreign trade and payments. Now he brings his breadth of mind and experience to the problem of maintaining an equitable balance between high and low on the bishops' bench.

#### Ike's Pension

As he convalesces on his farm at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, President Eisenhower will have to give some thought to his own financial future.

When he leaves the White House—and most observers still believe that he will not seek re-election—Mr. Eisenhower will be entitled to an army pension of £8,500 a year. He may receive another £8,500 a year if Congress passes a Bill to establish a pension scheme for all ex-Presidents.

Although he is far from poor, Mr. Eisenhower will need the money. He has invested £120,000—the bulk of his fortune—in his farm. But this makes an annual loss of £8,000 or more. Some years of patient toil will be needed before the Eisenhower agricultural account begins to show a profit.

#### Mr. Molotov Underground

**T**ONIGHT at Geneva Mr. Molotov celebrates a memorable anniversary. Fifteen years ago he was giving dinner to

# PEOPLE and THING

Ribbentrop in the Soviet Embassy in Berlin. At 9.40 p.m. the "Alert" sounded, and Ribbentrop and Molotov were taken at once to the deep shelter of the Reich's Foreign Ministry.

As Sir Winston Churchill commented, "We had heard of the conference beforehand, and, though not invited to join in the discussion, did not wish to be left entirely out of the proceedings."

The two Ministers were kept below for several hours by British victim.

Stalin had assumed that the Allies were hopelessly weak and that it was better to have a share in Hitler's booty than to be a Nazi

victim. After that little air raid on Berlin the Russians began to have more suspicion of Hitler and less contempt for the West.

#### New Walton Music

SIR WILLIAM WALTON, just returned from the United States where his opera "Troilus and Cressida" has been enthusiastically received in New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, is to conduct on Wednesday a programme of his own music for the Royal Philharmonic Society at Festival Hall—the first occasion on which he has conducted a complete concert here.

Next week he receives a degree from London University—his sixth honorary doctorate.

With his first opera behind him, Sir William is looking ahead. He admits to a new cello concerto which will be ready for Platigorsky in a year. A new opera and a new ballet are mooted, but the librettist, Christopher Hassall, and the choreographer, Frederick Ashton, await inspiration for subjects. Now Liverpool has commissioned a second symphony without imposing a time-limit. Sir William will be busy.

#### Forsyte in Bouvierie St.

"PUNCH" is, in more senses than one, a family affair; and when I heard that Mr. Alan Agnew is shortly to hand over the managing directorship to his son, Mr. Peter Agnew, I went down to Bouvierie Street, penetrated the darkling halls of the "Punch" office, and was shown into the eminently Galsworthian sanctum of the man who owns the second greatest humorous magazine in the world.

(Second? The audited circulation of "Punch" in August last was 149,556 and at the same time, that of the "New Yorker" was 276,863.)

#### Agnew Cousinage

The Agnews have controlled the fortunes of "Punch" for nearly a hundred years, and Mr. Peter Agnew has "learnt the business" with Victorian thoroughness; but there is nothing Victorian about his father's readiness to move into industrious retirement. These are

Forsytes whose saga is far from complete.

I had never realised how close was the cousinage that binds the Agnews of Bouvierie Street to their namesakes in Old Bond Street, who have long been among London's most distinguished art-dealers. The drawings in the one set of offices could hang in the other and not be disgraced. Moreover, the publishing branch of the family is bent on upholding the important though unassertive role of "Punch" in the history of English draughtsmanship.

#### New Lord Mallard

If you had passed down Oxford's Catte Street on Saturday evening a week ago you might have wondered what on earth were the

boisterous and far from academic sounds leaking from the ancient grey stones of All Souls. You were hearing the Fellows and quondam Fellows of the College, at their annual gaudy on the Saturday next after All Souls' day, singing the chorus of the ancient Mallard song:

Oh, by the blood of King Edward!

Oh, by the blood of King Edward!

It was a swapping, swapping mallard.

And the singer of this strange ballad was a new Lord Mallard, the College's master of jewelries, filling the place of the late Sir Dougal Malcolm, who twenty-seven years ago followed in the office of Archbishop Lang. When Lang was

# NGS: By ATTICUS

translated to Canterbury he had to vacate this dearly-beloved role on thus becoming ex officio the College's Visitor. The latest in this eminent succession is no less a person than Lord Somervell.

## "Painted Ladies"

MY recent note on smoked salmon started a correspondence with a Lowestoft kipper expert who knows one of the few curers in Britain still smoking the herring as it was smoked a hundred years ago.

Night-long smoking over smouldering fires of oak dust went out with the first world war. The insinuation of dye during the essential period in brine made the fish look brighter and juicier, reduced the period in smoke, cut

down costs and created the "painted ladies" which is the old-timers' name for the modern kipper.

Easily persuaded, I purchased a box of authentic kippers from the staunch curer, and I can indeed confirm that they are a dish for the breakfast epicure.

To those who would like to share my discovery of the real kipper, I will send the address of the Lowestoft curer on receipt of a stamped and addressed envelope.

## Traitor's Plate

THERE is an echo of treason and Tower Hill in an heraldic plate which has just been acquired by the Dean and Chapter of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. It is the Garter plate of Thomas

Howard, Earl Marshal and (fourth) Duke of Norfolk, which was torn down in the reign of Elizabeth I and is now to be replaced in the Chapel.

Thomas Howard contemplated marriage with Mary Queen of Scots and was involved in the Ridolfi plot to overthrow Queen Elizabeth. He was degraded from the Order in 1571 and beheaded the following year. In those days it was the custom for the plates of degraded knights to be ceremoniously torn down by Garter King of Arms, and the corners of this plate are bent as if it had been removed by force.

It was found among the antiquities collected by the late Dr. Philip Nelson of Liverpool.

## Ghost Story Detailed

IT seems I was misinformed when I wrote a fortnight ago that Mr. Cleveland Amory, who had been assisting the Duchess of Windsor with her autobiography until she decided to cancel his contract, had been given access to authoritative sources at Buckingham Palace. I thought my informant in America wholly reliable, but I am now assured that there is no record at the Palace of any such facilities having been given to Mr. Amory.

This correction seems to cast doubt on some of the rest of my report about legal agitation in America over the book's progress. Indeed, my latest information (unchallengeable) is that the first instalment of the new version of the autobiography was delivered to McCall's last week.

## Parnassus Today: No. 3

WITH his great stature, broad oval forehead and circitous gait, Mr. Peter Racine Fricker would be conspicuous anywhere. His spectacles, heavy-framed and Huxleyesque, mark him down as a rising executive; but in fact, at the age of thirty-five, he is the most successful of our younger composers and the chairman, this year, of the Composers' Guild.

Like many of his colleagues, Peter Fricker finds it easier to get performances in Germany than in England. But his triumphal visits to Hanover, Darmstadt and Munich serve merely to offset the traditional drudgeries of a composer's life—the days, for instance,

which may begin at 4 a.m. with a long session of copying scores.

## Derisory Royalties

Mr. Fricker is luckier than most of the 180 members of the Composers' Guild, for, ever since he won the Koussevitsky Prize with his First Symphony in 1949, he has always been able to work with a particular performance in view. (He is at present preparing, for the B.B.C., a ninety-minute version of a French medieval legend.)

But composers have not shared in the new prosperity which orchestral musicians, for instance, now enjoy. Their lot remains laborious and obscure, with teaching (Mr. Fricker is Director of Music at Morley College) as the best method of augmenting royalties—that are derisory.

## An Embassy Mystery

WE seem to be no nearer to a solution of that minor Foreign Office mystery, the case of the Castlereagh portrait. Two years ago a fine portrait of Lord Castlereagh was sent to our Embassy in Montevideo at the request of the Ambassador.

Since then certain cynics have maintained that the Ambassador really meant to ask for a portrait of Lord Canning, the Foreign Minister who boasted that he had called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old. So far intensive research has failed to reveal any close connection between Castlereagh and that part of South America. Canning, however, is a local hero.

Now a fresh parliamentary question on the subject has given Mr. Nigel Birch a chance to make the most enigmatic ministerial reply of the week: "I understand that the portrait has been very well received in Montevideo. The great Lord Castlereagh has been dead for some time."

## Mikemanship

FOLLOWING the Burgess and Maclean debate I note that the Communists take a serious view of the evils of spying in London. Our Foreign Office recently received a heated protest from an Iron Curtain Ambassador who claimed that he had found microphones hidden in his own quarters.

A formal investigation showed that microphones were concealed in the Embassy. These had been bought, a few weeks before in the Brompton Road, by a member of the Ambassador's own Communist entourage.